

REMARKS

Initially, Applicant thanks the Patent Office for indicating that claims 1-5 and 7-9 contain allowable subject matter.

Claims 1-11, following entry of this Amendment, are all the claims pending in the application. By amendment above, claims 1, 4 and 6 have been amended. Claims 10 and 11 have been added. No new matter has been added.

Reconsideration of the subject patent application and allowance of all of the claims is respectfully requested in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks.

The Patent Office suggests that Applicant incorporates section headings in the specification. Applicant has included said headings by amendment above. In addition, Applicant submits concurrently herewith a substitute specification, which incorporates the requested section headings and conforms to U.S. practice. No new matter has been added.

Claims 6, 7 and 9 have been objected to for a minor informality. Claim 6 has been amended to replace the term "the" with "a". Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the objection.

Claim 6 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Hahn et al. (DE19732295) ("Hahn"). Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection.

Independent claim 1 now recites, inter alia, "a control central (1) adapted to obtain regional meteorological data and to transmit a predetermined activating signal (15) for activating the heating element via an existing communication network (2, 3) at a point of time depending on said data." Hahn fails to disclose, teach or suggest this limitation.

The Patent Office asserts that Hahn discloses "a control central (16 of Fig. 1) adapted to transmit an activating signal (see arrows in Fig. 1) via an existing communication network" However, the control central of Hahn merely transmits weather data, i.e., a form of neutral information, with no inherent activation signal. In

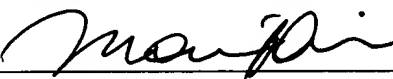
other words, the control central does not generate an activation signal or transmit such activation signals. Further, Hahn is directed to a method and system for transmitting or distributing weather data from a central unit (16 of Fig. 1) to remotely located heating plants.

In contradistinction, in the present invention, as set forth in claim 6, a control central 1 transmits predetermined operating or activating signals 15 via an existing communications network using, for example, a modem 2, a communication exchange 3 (e.g., a radio signal), or a telecommunications signal to a remotely operated unit 4. The unit 4 controls a switch or valve for activating/deactivating a heating element 8. Accordingly, local storage and processing of weather data is not required, thereby reducing the complexity of the local heating plant, whereas all the generation of activation signals for a plurality of local plants may be performed in a single control central (e.g., in the form of a personal computer or the like).

Since Hahn fails to teach each and every limitation of claim 6, Hahn cannot anticipate this claim. Thus, the rejection of claim 6 should be withdrawn.

Applicant submits that the present application is now in condition for allowance. Reconsideration and favorable action are earnestly requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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Attachments: Replacement Sheets
Annotated Sheet Showing Changes
Substitute Specification

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